

Chapter 2:

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Growth:

Land Acquisition in the Bay Area

One of the most aggressive and adept congressional representatives of his era, Phil Burton recognized that he struck political gold with Golden Gate National Recreation Area. As a political device, the Bay Area park had no parallel for the intrepid congressman. It met the needs of a variety of constituencies, forged political alliances with people predisposed to disagree with Burton, focused on urban areas in a time when that emphasis was mandatory for federal programs, held an important place within Burton's liberal world view, and muted most potential political adversaries. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Burton quickly recognized, was more than a regional asset; it gave him new leverage in Congress as well. The park became a symbol of Burton's foresight and leadership; it illustrated his deft maneuvering and ability to build coalitions. Golden Gate National Recreation Area's establishment signified more than a triumph of environmental sentiment and egalitarian democracy. It also initiated a repeatable political strategy not only in northern California, but elsewhere in the nation as well. Beginning with Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Burton set in motion a series of park proclamations that continued throughout the subsequent decade and gave the ebullient congressman almost unequaled power in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The process of acquiring land at Golden Gate prior to 1980 became one of the most efficient and rapid stories in Park Service history. The combination of the negative experience at Point Reyes, where delayed acquisition and inflated land values drove the cost of the park sky high and slowed its completion, and the active Burton and his network of grassroots supporters. NPS regional and Washington office officials played an instrumental role in this process, supporting Burton throughout the process. More than being along for the ride, the Park Service played a crucial role in shaping the new park.

Burton was assisted on all fronts in the Bay Area by a remarkable network of activists, headed by Amy Meyer and Edgar Wayburn. By 1972, the two founders of People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area (PFGGNRA) gathered around themselves a loosely knit confederation of individuals and groups that together wielded enormous influence in the Bay Area. These conservationists believed that they undertook a great and selfless endeavor and their enthusiasm reflected their powerful sense of mission. As PFGGNRA grew and gained influence, it became a force in regional environmental politics. If there was one drawback to the loose affiliation that emerged, it was precisely the dexterity that helped it function. PFGGNRA structured activities such as lobbying and constituency-building, but beyond the organization's priority projects, many details went unaddressed. The result was a posture that sometimes alienated not only local and regional politicians, but one that sometimes failed to connect with on-the-ground activists who might be good supporters. Facing a cadre of people who opposed the expansion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and other greenspace projects, alienation of supporters presaged controversy at the grassroots. In a few cases, PFGGNRA came to be regarded as arrogant and uninterested in the local consequences of region-wide actions, a perception that affected the park's growth. Especially south of San Francisco, in San Mateo

County, this perception flourished, but generally, the coalition of activists was extremely effective in lobbying for acquisition of new parklands.

At its 1972 establishment, Golden Gate National Recreation Area was a pastiche, an unwieldy mix of civilian and army lands defined as much by the military's willingness to release their properties as any other circumstance. The park boundaries had been hastily drawn, and a range of other constraints impaired the establishment process. Much of the incredibly valuable land adjacent to the park was not included within the initial boundaries. State and local recalcitrance, opposition, or even slow response to planned development left some tracts beyond reach. Other lands belonged to private owners, some of whom feared federal intrusion. Even when some sellers were willing to deal, federal funds for acquisition could not always be easily secured and the transfer of land from other public jurisdictions could be a complex process. When Amy Meyer, Edgar Wayburn, and Phil Burton looked at the park they created, they could celebrate. In her thank-you letter to Burton, Amy Meyer wanted to write "I can't believe we ate the whole thing"—a slogan in a television commercial popular at the time—but the formal Wayburn made her cross it out. All three recognized that they had begun, but not finished, the process of securing recreational and wildlands for the Bay Area. Too many important features remained outside park boundaries, and even those lands included in the park were not completely free of intrusion. Private holdings encroached throughout the 34,000-acre area, corporations and individuals held leases to other land, and a range of local constituencies remained ambivalent about a federal presence next door to them. Golden Gate National Recreation Area was a starting point, perfect for the plans of Phil Burton and the coalition of activists indebted to him.⁷⁵

By the early 1970s, the ebullient and entirely urban Burton had become quite a conservationist. His views changed considerably from the early 1960s, when he regarded parks as toys for the rich. In 1964, Burton was one of the sponsors of the controversial bill to establish Redwood National Park, which culminated nearly fifty years of effort when it succeeded. The wealthy and influential, hardly the people who regularly voted for Burton, initiated most of the early efforts to establish a redwood park north of San Francisco. Well into the 1960s, residents resisted it with a fierce dedication to the timber industry and the employment it provided. By sponsoring the redwood park proposal, Burton served notice that he could meld the interests of a number of different constituencies in the Bay Area. He already had the support of organized labor. Park creation and support became a way for the congressman to step beyond his traditional working class constituency and appeal to a broader swath of the northern California urban public.⁷⁶

During the first decade following Golden Gate's proclamation, Burton mustered political muscle and utilized parliamentary and negotiating skills to redefine the recreation area's boundaries as he reshaped the national park system. The park's growth began by filling in holes created by its initial boundaries. Expansion took on a new shape with the passage of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, more commonly called the Omnibus Bill of 1978, and culminated after the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, which evicted the Democrats from the White House and enabled the exiting Congress to pass funds for previously authorized

⁷⁵ John Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Philip Burton* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 215.

⁷⁶ Susan R. Schrepfer, *The Fight to Save the Redwoods: A History of Environmental Reform, 1917-1978* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983); Judith Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms: The Life and Legacy of Congressman Phil Burton"* (San Francisco: Mary Judith Robinson, 1994), 422.

acquisitions. Burton's larger aspirations were linked to park expansion. Golden Gate National Recreation Area's growth began the day President Richard Nixon signed the bill establishing the park. Its first stage included the final acquisition of a range of areas authorized in 1974—Oakwood Valley, Wolfback Ridge, Stinson Beach, Muir Beach, and San Francisco Maritime State Historical Park, the last reauthorized as a separate unit, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, in 1988—and later additions under the 1978 Omnibus Bill. Burton inaugurated the second phase of land expansion with the 1980 park enlargement. In the mid-1970s, Burton vowed to expand the park to the south; through the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1980, Burton's reprise of his 1978 success, he added to it both south and north. It was a fitting capstone for the political architect of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, a man at the apex of his political career.

This era bore the imprimatur of Phil Burton, rough-edged and willing to use any legitimate means to achieve not only local but larger national goals. With the support of Bay Area constituencies, Burton and his brother, John, elected to Congress in a special election in 1974, engineered additions to Golden Gate National Recreation Area and greater control of lands surrounding the park. Congressman William S. Mailliard contributed to the process, but Burton often evinced little respect for the actions of his colleague from the other side of the aisle. Golden Gate National Recreation Area remained Burton's pet project, the basis for much of his political clout as well as the point of origin of the strategy that made him one of the most powerful people on Capitol Hill.

Even before the ink was dry on the Golden Gate National Recreation Area enabling act, the indefatigable Amy Meyer and Edgar Wayburn already planned additions to the park. The extent of the original Golden Gate National Recreation Area—more than 34,000 acres—was a remarkable accomplishment, but to this duo only a starting point for the drive for the nation's most impressive urban national park area. Meyer and Wayburn conceived the park as a testimony to the power of grassroots activism and sophisticated political maneuvering. Their optimism was well founded. Their initial success came at the propitious moment when urban parks received congressional attention and they had the full backing of one of the rising Democratic politicians on Capitol Hill. The public reliance on government to solve social ills that defined the 1960s began to abate early in the 1970s, but many people, especially in the Bay Area, retained faith in the government's ability to balance interests in a democratic and chaotic society. The old Progressive faith in fair government as the solution to all kinds of social disputes retained many adherents, especially in California, and the idea of urban green space under federal management held great promise.

Divided by the entrance to San Francisco Bay, the original Golden Gate National Recreation Area was essentially two very different kinds of parks under one management rubric. Urban recreational space comprised one dimension. Located primarily in San Francisco, features such as Fort Mason, Fort Funston, Fort Miley, and Crissy Field all were historic landscapes that became surrounded by homes, businesses, roads, and other urban structures as the city grew during the twentieth century. Military architecture had been a favorite of American travelers, an expectation derived from the emphasis on history in the park system made possible by the addition of historic battlefields and other areas during the New Deal. Such places shared much with urban recreational parks such as Gateway National Recreation Area. They also offered a respite from pressing urbanity as well as opportunities for civic uses—education, community activity, and other similar concepts—that were not historically functions of national park areas. Tourist potential also presented itself in a city that increasingly regarded its future in the service

economy. Alcatraz especially enjoyed great cachet with the public and possessed enormous potential as a destination for out-of-town visitors. To the north of Golden Gate Bridge, the rest of the park offered more traditional national park features. Semi-wild lands, mostly located in Marin County, provided vistas and recreational potential. From the Headlands to Point Reyes, a connected greenbelt that skirted urbanity offered more traditional national park experiences. The beauty of the rugged coast, old military forts, and stunning natural vistas offered the kinds of features that Americans expected from their national parks throughout the first seventy years of the twentieth century.

But the park was disjointed, its flow broken by inholdings and boundaries that made important features difficult to reach. Efforts to consolidate and expand began simultaneously. The goals included adding both urban and semi-wild parklands. PFGGNRA wove the loose components into the conceptualization of an expanded national park. Because most of Golden Gate National Recreation Area's component pieces existed independently before the park was established, the new united area faced an identity crisis: the public regarded the new recreation area as a series of unconnected segments instead as a unified national park. A certain amount of that perception was cultural; people saw with the same eyes they always had and new signs announcing the national park did little to change public perception. The park was not contiguous and it was difficult to distinguish parkland from adjacent private lands or state parks, especially in Marin County. Boundary adjustments could help rectify perceptual and management confusion.

When they first conceived of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Meyer and Wayburn had little power or influence; most of what clout they possessed came from Wayburn's Sierra Club experience and Meyer's gritty determination. By the time they sought expansion of the park boundaries in early 1973, they and PFGGNRA were major players in Bay Area environmentalism. Questions of land use and quality-of-life environmentalism, both central to the formation of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, became important national themes in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The "Environmental Crisis," as Americans knew the issue, reflected the national ideal of living in a plentiful world without being bothered by the consequences of creating that abundance. Nowhere was that idea more a part of local and regional self-image than in the Bay Area. As a result, PFGGNRA's founders became well-known—loved and feared—civic leaders and activists whose actions and plans caught the attention of most and the ire of some.

For the National Park Service, the emergence of PFGGNRA was both a tremendous advantage and a potentially divisive issue. By the 1970s, the Park Service had undergone a transformation. No longer could it count on a supportive public, docilely loyal to the agency's agenda. Especially in the battles over designated wilderness, the Park Service found that it enjoyed a vocal constituency that would support parks—but not necessarily the agency's programs for them. As a result, public constituencies exerted growing influence over agency policy, a change most visible at the local level.⁷⁷ PFGGNRA possessed a proprietary feeling about Golden Gate National Recreation Area, a strong sense of ownership of the park. "This place is my home, GGNRA is my home," founding member Amy Meyer articulated in 2002. "This is mine. I mean all of it. And I've not exactly been possessive of it in that way, but I am.

⁷⁷ Ronald A. Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers* (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future, 1984), 68-73; Hal K. Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the U.S. Since 1945* (New York: Harbrace Books, 1997), 52-61.

All of us, all the people I work with, care passionately about this place. We love it.”⁷⁸ For the Park Service, PFGGNRA’s perspective and the power it accrued could be a double-edged sword.

PFGGNRA was integrated into the structure of land acquisition at the park. Even though the park had the requisite Land Acquisition Plan, until 1980, a collaboration between Superintendent William Whalen, Assistant Superintendent Jack Wheat, Amy Meyer and Ed Wayburn directed acquisition. The process worked well and moved quickly, allowing the Park Service to create objectives, plan for their with speed, and achieve them through powerful political connections in a very short time.⁷⁹

Suburban development in Marin County posed the largest single threat to park expansion and PFGGNRA applied its hard-won influence to growth questions there. Every subdivision, every road, every new commuter meant additional pressure on finite space, and every decision to develop curtailed the options of park managers and their advocacy groups. Since the end of World War II, the entire peninsula had been besieged by development, and Marin County’s affluent suburbanites and longtime rural residents became adept at ignoring their differences and defending their often similar interests. Faced with the threat of developments that impaired the paradise they sought, Marin County residents embraced the kind of quality-of-life environmentalism that marked the 1970s. Zoning and planning were key dimensions of this strategy.⁸⁰ Implementation meant forging relationships with government, sometimes difficult for longtime rural residents accustomed to operating on their own in a world without restrictions. The onslaught of growth demanded that local communities find new strategies and the newcomers—the recent arrivals in Marin County who wanted to preserve its way of life—provided the best allies for longtime local residents. These newcomers shared a similar perspective and seemed to dairy farmers and ranchers to share their appreciation for Marin County as it was. They quickly recognized that the park provided an important barrier to unwanted and hasty change, and after the establishment of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, adding additional lands to the park seemed the most viable strategy for protecting local interests.

After dodging the Marincello development and its many-faceted impact, Marin County leaders recognized that the national park was an asset. County strategists embraced organized countywide planning as protection from the worst excesses of suburban growth. Some communities, such as Sausalito in the shadow of the Golden Gate Bridge, recognized the commonality of their and the park’s interests and supported the park. After the establishment of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, PFGGNRA continued its advocacy. The organization issued a white paper calling for minor boundary adjustments. As in any large transfer of land, a number of pieces were inaccurately described, leaving some acreage designated for inclusion outside of the park and other privately owned land that the planners did not envision within its boundaries. The Marin County Parks and Recreation Department worked closely with PFGGNRA to alleviate this problem, establishing a relationship that developed into a formidable alliance. In 1972 and 1973, the Marin County Planning Commission held hearings on the Marin

⁷⁸ Meyer interview, February 25, 2002, 8.

⁷⁹ Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

⁸⁰ John Hart, *Farming on the Edge: Saving Family Farms in Marin County, California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Samuel P. Hays and Barbara D. Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Hal K. Rothman, *Saving the Planet: The American Response to Environmentalism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Inc., 2000).

County Plan (MCP), its countywide management framework. With its recent and widely acknowledged success, PFGGNRA participated in the debate and found much to like about the plan's emphasis on open space, quality of life, needs of visitors, and mass transit. The alliance opened other opportunities. The Marin County Board of Supervisors recognized that the park's establishment gave PFGGNRA, the Park Service, and the county similar obligations and needs. MCP also recognized the park's value both as an economic device and as a strategy for controlling growth and its consequences. Aware of the value of local allies and the significance of planning for Marin County, PFGGNRA warmly endorsed MCP.⁸¹

The alliance proved valuable when the Nixon administration declined to include funds to purchase 16,500 acres in west Marin County in the 1974 budget, breaking a promise made during the election campaign and effectively stymieing the prospect of additional lands for Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Although the Nixon administration presented it as a cost-cutting measure in a time of inflation, some regarded it as retribution by Armed Forces Committee Chairman Edward Hebert for Burton's 1972 end run that created the park. Faced with this setback, PFGGNRA, Burton, and the park constituency mounted a forceful attack on the decision. Mailliard, the Republican congressman, made a personal appeal to Nixon, Burton mustered his influence, and the Park Service looked for alternatives. The Department of the Interior found itself with \$5.8 million for national park acquisition that had not been allocated, and Mailliard proposed its transfer to Golden Gate National Recreation Area for land purchases in Marin County. While the sum was not sufficient to accomplish everything that had been planned, it was significantly better than nothing.⁸²

Marin County public officials also actively supported park expansion. On May 9, 1973, County Supervisor Peter Arrigoni addressed the Department of the Interior Subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, requesting \$25 million to purchase land in West Marin for Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Upon his return from Washington, D.C., Arrigoni announced that he believed a portion of his request for acquisition funds would be included in the final budget.⁸³ An alliance between local government and the Park Service and its supporters indicated the significance of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and its local importance as a barrier to unchecked growth.

There were moments when this often fragile alliance failed to hold together. In one such instance, the city of Sausalito, which stood to gain by quality-of-life measures from the reservation of land on its boundaries, requested that the Park Service add an area of the town east of Highway 101. The city's objective was to use the park to forestall development and preserve open space not only near but also in Sausalito. Advocates pointed to the lands that the Park Service managed in San Francisco and suggested that the Sausalito addition would be

⁸¹ Amy Meyer, "PFGGNRA and the Marin Countywide Plan," February 20, 1973, PFGGNRA I, Box 15, PFGGNRA - Memos; Amy Meyer, Walter Mollison, and Robert C. Young to Board of Supervisors, Marin County, May 27, 1973, PFGGNRA I, Box 15, PFGGNRA - Memos; Edgar Wayburn and Amy Meyer to Nathaniel P. Reed, June 22, 1973, GGNRA, CCF, L-1417, Vol 1 12/1/72-7/31/73, Acquisition of Land, General.

⁸² William Thomas, "Setback for Gate Recreation Area," *SFC*, February 5, 1973; "Lawmakers Will Seek Park Funds," *SFC*, February 6, 1973; Dale Champion, "Big Bay Park - U.S. Finds Cash," *SFC*, February 27, 1973.

⁸³ "Statement of the Honorable Peter Arrigoni, Member, Marin County Board of Supervisors to the Interior Subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, May 9, 1973," PFGGNRA I, Box 9, Marin County Government -Board of Supervisors.

complementary. The Park Service resisted, believing the property clearly had more value to Sausalito. Keeping to its vision of Marin County as the open and wild section of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the agency saw little value in lands separated from the rest of the park by the highway. Nor did the parcels seem a viable use of limited agency funds. Even worse from the NPS perspective, the land owners opposed inclusion. By the 1970s, the Park Service knew better than to antagonize unwilling landowners. "Willing sellers" had become agency trope. In the end, a compromise was reached; the owners agreed to "View Easements," a legally binding arrangement that prevented wholesale development, and the lands remained private.⁸⁴ The city of Sausalito was satisfied and the Park Service circumvented a situation that could have damaged important regional relationships.

Despite the support of Arrigoni and the Marin County Board of Supervisors, the growth of Golden Gate National Recreation Area in Marin County faced obstacles from state government. The establishing legislation allowed for the transfer of state parklands surrounded by the park. These included Mount Tamalpais, Angel Island, Stinson Beach, Muir Beach, Marin Headlands, and three beaches in San Francisco, Phelan, Baker, and Thornton state beaches. In 1973, when the Park Service pursued transfer of title, William Penn Mott Jr., director of California Parks and Recreation who more than a decade later became director of the National Park Service, mounted a campaign to thwart the Park Service. Some people regarded his objections as a turf battle, a contest of mission and constituency, but Mott expressed genuine reservations about the value of national park area designation for state parks, reimbursement for money spent to acquire lands, and the ability of the National Park Service to secure funds for management of the state areas. The California State Park System, Mott averred, "can do the job, and we can do it at less cost and better than it can be done by the Federal Government."⁸⁵

Mott was a powerful state official and his opposition threatened the objectives of Burton and PFGGNRA. At least privately prepared for compromise in the Bay Area, Mott was adamant that California parks in the Redwood National Park area remain under state management. Up the northern coast, Mott retained a stronger base of support than he could muster in the Bay Area. The initial Redwood National Park had been established in 1969 over a loud local outcry that claimed it would damage the regional timber economy, and resentment toward the park and its stewards remained powerful. Mott found widespread support in Humboldt County, but despite his outspoken pronouncements, he was a realist and inherently more malleable about the Bay Area.

On February 21, 1973, William J. Whalen, the first superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, NPS Western Regional Director Howard Chapman, Special Assistant to the GGNRA Superintendent Douglas B. Cornell Jr., and Jack Davis, superintendent of Redwood National Park, met with Mott seeking to resolve the widening gulf between federal and state park managers. In a tense exchange, Mott held firm; he simply could not foresee the transfer of state parklands to federal jurisdiction. Perhaps, Mott suggested, if the federal government proposed a compromise, he might be amenable, but Chapman explained that he lacked the discretion to consider such an option. Perturbed by what he regarded as Park Service intransigence, Mott made clear his resentment of the encirclement of his state parks by the

⁸⁴ *Draft, Golden Gate National Recreation Area Land Protection Plan*, SOA, Box 55, L14 Land Protection Plan.

⁸⁵ William Penn Mott Jr. to Honorable Eugene A. Chappie, February 14, 1973, PFGGNRA I, Box 18, Projects - State Park Land Transfer; William Thomas, "Tough Mott Stand on Headlands Park," *SFC*, May 7, 1973.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The meeting reached an impasse, and Mott prepared to leave. As he stood, he asked for a clear definition of NPS objectives. When Chapman outlined NPS priorities as 1) donation of the state parklands, 2) a management agreement that allowed NPS to manage the state parks in question and a transfer agreement at a less-than-fee cost, and 3) a detailed management and planning agreement that would involve joint construction, development, planning, and expenditures, the impasse broke. Both sides had been so adamant about their position that they failed to see the commonality of purpose. Although he could not countenance a transfer of land to expand Redwood National Park, Mott found the NPS approach far more acceptable once clarified and agreed to explore options at Golden Gate National Recreation Area with other state officials. At the end of the meeting, the Park Service remained hopeful about an arrangement of some kind.⁸⁶

At the same time, NPS officials negotiated with other property holders to resolve boundary and transfer concerns. The boundary issues presented a legislative nightmare. Several locations—Haslett Warehouse in San Francisco, a 214-acre parcel of Wolfback Ridge adjacent to Sausalito, 145 acres in the Tennessee Valley, and about four acres near Muir Beach—had been omitted from the final legislation in the haste to finish the bill. Almost fifty acres of home sites near Stinson Beach had been included within park boundaries as a result of an incorrect description. To save time, money, and effort, NPS officials sought to rectify these issues administratively rather than through legislation. Administrative remedy typically offered smooth exchanges that did not merit significant outside comment as well as smaller expenditures devoted to land acquisition. Park officials brought congressional staff members to Golden Gate National Recreation Area to make their case for administrative transfer. In one instance, Assistant to the Superintendent Douglas B. Cornell spent two days showing Bernard C. Hartung, U.S. Sen. Alan Bible's staff representative to the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, the proposed park adjustments. Cornell made the strongest possible case for administrative adjustment of the boundaries. PFGGNRA supported the agency, with Wayburn and Meyer making the case to Nathaniel P. Reed, assistant secretary of the interior for National Parks, who was well acquainted with both and respectful of their clout and organizing ability. Reed recognized the value in proceeding at the administrative level, but found that congressional subcommittees thought that legislative action was necessary in a number of transfers.⁸⁷ This required following a process similar to the one used to found the park. Meyer and Wayburn went back to work, this time with the support of the emerging park apparatus and the well-established Regional Office in the Bay Area and well aware that the full power of the energetic, combative, and determined Phil Burton still stood behind them.

The process of building a constituency for boundary revisions required not only action by PFGGNRA, but Park Service efforts as well. Local alliances helped the Park Service in this process. At County Supervisor Peter Arrigoni's urging, Marin County adopted a resolution supporting an adjustment of park boundaries to include land in Wolfback Ridge and Tennessee

⁸⁶ Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, to the Files, February 23, 1973, CCF, Box 1, L-1417, Vol. 1 12/1/72-7/31/73, Acquisition of Land.

⁸⁷ Edgar Wayburn and Amy Meyer to Nathaniel P. Reed, June 22, 1973; Nathaniel P. Reed to Edgar Wayburn and Amy Meyer, July 16, 1973; "Proposed Boundary Revisions, Golden Gate National Recreation Area," all CCF, Box 1, L-1417, Vol 1 12/1/72-7/31/73, Acquisition of Land, General; William J. Whalen, "Status Report, Golden Gate National Recreation Area," CCF, Box 1, L-1425, Vol. 1, November 1971 - July 31, 1973; Douglas B. Cornell, Jr, to Bernard C. Hartung, April 26, 1973, CCF, Box 1, L-1417, Vol 1 12/1/72-7/31/73, Acquisition of Land, General.

Valley, four acres at Muir Beach, and ten acres at Stinson Beach. The county also supported the Park Service's goal of deleting fifty acres of private holdings at Stinson Beach. The county was not alone; the Tamalpais Community Services District also supported the revised boundaries, as did numerous other local entities. Although many private landowners felt betrayed when they found that the Nixon administration refused to fund the purchases authorized in the establishing legislation and the Department of the Interior only peripherally contested the White House decision, the support of public institutions in Marin County for the deletion helped mute most tension.⁸⁸

By summer 1973, Whalen could see evident progress in the acquisition of a number of key parcels. Private landowners still expressed discomfort over the time the transactions consumed; Mott and the state parks still resisted a takeover with intensity; in a confidential memo, Whalen observed that they were "running scared"; and the military generally acquiesced to Park Service plans to move into the transferred properties. Howard Chapman complimented Lieutenant General Richard G. Stilwell, commander of the Sixth Army, for the cooperation his staff offered as Whalen and the GGNRA staff moved into the park's new headquarters at Fort Mason in spring 1973. A change in Army personnel helped the Park Service address its new responsibilities at the Presidio. The post remained in military hands, but the Department of the Interior received jurisdiction of some parts of the property. Under Stilwell, Colonel John Fellows, an ardent opponent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, commanded the Presidio until Colonel Robert Kane succeeded him on July 31, 1973. Whalen found Kane far more receptive to the Park Service and its needs and anticipated a much better relationship with the Army after Fellows' departure.⁸⁹

The assumption of administrative control of properties included in Golden Gate National Recreation Area remained a complicated process. Military transfers proceeded most rapidly. Fort Mason and most of the San Francisco properties were also under NPS management. The Marin forts—Baker, Barry, and Cronkhite—also came to the Park Service in 1973. Each of these had been divided under the statute, with the eastern portion of Fort Baker remaining under the administration of the Department of Defense. Parts of Forts Barry and Cronkhite reverted to the State of California. The General Services Administration turned Alcatraz over to the Park Service in April 1973. Private acquisitions required funding and an elaborate array of hearings and public discussion that conveyed local and regional sanction. The process took longer, faced greater and often unexpected obstacles, and could be very complicated.⁹⁰

In August 1973, Secretary of the Interior C.B. Rogers Morton and the Park Service announced the purchases of the first private lands included in the establishing legislation. The Wilkins Ranch in Bolinas Lagoon, a 1,332-acre tract that the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) had previously purchased, was transferred to the Park Service for \$1,150,000. A 103-acre tract in

⁸⁸ Associate Director, National Park Service to Legislative Counsel, July 10, 1973; Richard A. Drever to William Mailliard, July 30, 1973; William J. Whalen, "Status Report: Golden Gate National Recreation Area," ca. July 1973, CCF Box 1, L-1425, Vol. 1, November 1972 - July 31, 1973, General.

⁸⁹ Howard Chapman to Director, National Park Service, December 5, 1972; Whalen, "Status Report: Golden Gate National Recreation Area"; Howard Chapman to Lt. Gen. Richard G. Stilwell, April 20, 1973, CCF, Box 1, L-1417, Vol 1 12/1/72-7/31/73, Acquisition of Land, General.

⁹⁰ Whalen, "Status Report: Golden Gate National Recreation Area;" "Degree of Federal Jurisdiction," ca. 1973, GGNRA CCF, Box 1, L1417, V 2, 8/1/71-12/1/73, Boundary Changes.

Tamalpais Valley cost \$635,000. The Park Service also obtained a two-year option to purchase the Marincello property from The Nature Conservancy as well as options on Slide Ranch, along the ocean near Bolinas. In addition, the organization agreed to donate the 500-acre Green Gulch Ranch to the park. Negotiations were also under way to purchase additional tracts of private land included in the establishing act.⁹¹

Private conservation groups such as The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Lands changed the scope of land acquisition at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Able to act independently of governmental agency constraints, the groups secured options on the properties in advance of park creation or in some instances, with the cooperation of the Park Service, in anticipation of legislation that would fund land acquisition and add it to the park. With their resources, they were able to serve as stewards until a federal arrangement, such as an authorizing bill or an acquisition appropriation, could be passed. In this, the private groups mirrored a familiar process of national park proclamation. Prior to 1945, the Antiquities Act of 1906, which allowed the president to proclaim national monuments from public land, served a similar function. After 1945, Congress refused to recognize such executive decision making by withholding funds for national monuments created without congressional approval. Conservation groups filled that gap by acquiring land that was threatened, and their resources also made it possible to include private land in the system. Private conservation groups engaged in land transfers and exchanges, and in some cases, purchased property that the Park Service or park advocates coveted. Their presence in the Bay Area created a level of flexibility for the Park Service that alleviated many of the constraints on agency activities.⁹²

Boundary adjustments continued to play a primary role in acquisition strategy at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. A draft revision bill was introduced late in October 1973 and by November 12, 1973, it reached the desk of Carl Albert, speaker of the House of Representatives. The bill substituted a revised boundary map for the one used in the authorizing legislation, adding 373.68 acres to the park while deleting 50.68 acres. The additional cost exceeded \$1.245 million; acquiring all the lands describe in the initial legislation had been projected to cost about \$1.88 million. Sale of the lands excised was estimated to bring \$635,000, which could be used to reduce the cost. Agency officials anticipated that the smaller cash outlay would diminish any opposition to the process.⁹³

They misjudged both the political and local response to the program. Within days of the introduction of the proposed bill, F. W. and June Warren, owners of one of the Wolfback Ridge parcels, expressed their dismay at what they regarded as a grab for their property. In an October 30, 1973, joint meeting of the Sausalito City Council and Planning Commission, the Warrens first saw the plans put forward by Burton that included their holdings. They regarded their property as a buffer zone between public and private land, and inclusion of their land in the park was, in their estimation, akin to "amputating a vital functional part of this community and dangerously isolating a vulnerable finger of residences to public access from all sides. This

⁹¹ "Ranch Tracts Bought for Recreation Area," *SFC*, August 4, 1973.

⁹² Huey Johnson to Joseph Rumberg, July 7, 1971, CCF, Box 1, June 1, 1970 - December 31, 1972, H14 History - Formation GGNRA; Hal Rothman, *America's National Monuments: The Politics of Preservation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 74-88, 212-32.

⁹³ Assistant Secretary of the Interior Jack Horton to Carl Albert, November 12, 1973, CCF, L-1417, Vol 2 8/1/71-12/1/73, Boundary Changes.

community has been conceived as an integral whole since its inception in 1945;" they finished with a flourish, "and we strongly protest its dismemberment." Rep. Mailliard was noticeably sympathetic to the Warrens and included their perspective when he discussed the bill in committee. The San Francisco Republican recognized the importance of local opposition and likely sought to undermine Burton. The two were cordial, but they represented different parties, and Burton had stolen Mailliard's idea when he pursued Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Turnabout was surely fair play.⁹⁴ The addition encountered an obstacle that could be labeled political.

Despite the opposition of area residents such as the Warrens, most of the resistance to the park addition could easily be construed as intraparty posturing in Washington, D.C. Democrats controlled Capitol Hill and Burton was powerful within the party. He had antagonized Rep. Hebert over the Presidio situation, and his relations with the "Water Buffalos"—the cadre of western congressmen and senators that included Sen. Alan Bible of Nevada, Sen. Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico, and Rep. Wayne Aspinall of Colorado, all Democrats, who used large-scale federally funded irrigation and water storage projects as a way to bring home the bacon and to build political alliances—were often tenuous, but Burton could always count votes. He excelled in keeping much of Congress in his debt and benefited from Democratic control of the California legislature, which redistricted Mailliard out of any chance of retaining his seat in an election. Mailliard resigned from the House and accepted appointment as ambassador to the Organization of America States. Appointed to Mailliard's seat, John Burton used the few months before the general election to secure his House position and he triumphed in November 1974. With another Burton representing Mailliard's district, which combined parts of San Francisco and Marin County, Phil Burton could count on stronger support from Marin County in Congress.⁹⁵

In December 1974, after a compromise about land acquisition had been worked out, both houses of Congress passed the boundary revision bill and sent it to the White House for President Gerald Ford's signature. Estimated at \$1,880,000 in value, the lands included 200 acres on both sides of Highway 101, including Wolfback Ridge and some lowlands on the east, 400 acres of undeveloped land in the Tennessee Valley, ten acres on the ridges above Stinson Beach, and two small parcels near Muir Beach. The bill also excluded the almost fifty acres of private holdings at Muir and Stinson beaches that the Park Service wanted to release. Although a compromise, the bill gave Phil Burton nearly everything he wanted. When President Ford signed the bill on December 26, 1974, the inaccuracies in the original park boundaries were clarified. The authorization to acquire Oakwood Valley, Wolfback Ridge, Stinson Beach, Muir Beach, and Haslett Warehouse was complete.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ F. W. Warren and June Warren to William Mailliard and Phillip Burton, November 15, 1973; "Statement of Congressman William S. Mailliard on Legislation to Amend the Act of October 27, 1972, to Establish the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco and Marin Counties, California, submitted to Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, November 12, 1973, CCF, L-1417, V 2, 8/1/71-12/11/73, Boundary Changes; Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 214.

⁹⁵ Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 250-54; Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 604-6; Richard Allan Baker, *Conservation Politics: The Senate Career of Clinton P. Anderson* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), 1-9; Gary E. Elliott, *Senator Alan Bible and the Politics of the New West* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994).

⁹⁶ Jack Horton to Carl Albert, November 12, 1973, CCF, Box 1, L 1417 V 2, 8/1/71-12/173, Boundary Changes; "Park Land Completion Date Is Told," *MLJ*, December 11, 1973; "Recreation Area Bill Sent to Ford's Desk," *MLJ*,

The success of national park expansion only enhanced the threat to state parks under William Penn Mott Jr. and his successors mounted effective resistance against Golden Gate National Recreation Area. After Ford signed the land acquisition bill, California State Parks and Recreation Directors Leonard Grimes Jr. and Herbert Rhodes commissioned a 1975 study to assess the viability of the transfers. The study rejected federal control, instead offering a plan for a "Golden Gateway State Urban Park." The authors pointed to the almost twenty years of state stewardship at Angel Island and San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park as well as the need for recreation for the growing urban population of the Bay Area. They candidly observed a number of significant problems for the state parks: insufficient funding, a growing backlog of deferred maintenance, and an overall lack of planning for Haslett Warehouse and other state-owned areas. In the end, the study followed Mott's reasoning: turning the parks over to the federal government amounted to an abdication of the state's mandate.⁹⁷

The Marin County state park controversy continued for most of 1975. The California Department of Parks and Recreation fought any transfers, enlisting its individual and organizational supporters. The Contra Costa Hills Club, Marin Conservation League, Tamalpais Conservation Club, Sempervirens Fund and others who opposed the transfer were particularly potent opponents. They were conservation advocacy groups and had supported the concept of a Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Often their letters expressed admiration for the process that created the national park and support for the expansion of the recreation area to the south, but strong opposition to turning the Marin County state parks over to the federal government. Made up of members of the same class as Meyer and Wayburn, these Marin County conservation groups used both their experience and their standing to argue that the state parks in Marin County should be excepted from inclusion in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. With such support, the California Parks and Recreation Commission executed a political maneuver that led to the demise of the proposed transfer of state parkland. As the California legislature moved to authorize a transfer of nine Bay Area state parks at the behest of State Senator George Moscone and Assemblyman Michael Wornum of the Ninth District, two Democrats who were the most prominent legislative advocates of including state parks in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the parks commission unanimously voted against a transfer without payment to California for the value of the lands. Without the commission's support, the transfer was dead, victim of state politics. Even though the legislature passed the bill, Governor Edmund P. "Jerry" Brown Jr. vetoed it.⁹⁸

The following year, a new effort that smoothed over the differences in the state and federal perspectives took shape. A compromise between Bay Area legislators such as Michael

December 17, 1974; *The National Parks, Index 1997-1999* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1997), 27.

⁹⁷ Department of Parks and Recreation, "The Golden Gate State Urban Park: A Special Study," (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1975), vii, 4; Leonard M. Grimes Jr. to George R. Moscone, May 22, 1975, PFGGNRA I, Box 18, Projects - State Land Transfer.

⁹⁸ Joanne Williams, "NotSoFast, GGNRA," *PS*, August 29, 1975; Michael Wornum to California State Park and Recreation Commission, September 19, 1975; Claude A. Look to Claire T. Dedrick, September 19, 1975; Leonore Bravo to George Moscone, October 24, 1975; Herbert Rhodes to Robert F. Raab, October 29, 1975, all PFGGNRA I, Box 9, Marin County Government - Board of Supervisors; Walter Schwartz, "Conservationists!," "Commission Attacks Parks Plan," *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle*, September 21, 1975; "Brown Vetoes Park Transfer," *SFC*, October 2, 1975, PFGGNRA I, Box 18, Projects - State Park Land, Transfer.

Wornum and John Foran and the governor led to approval of the transfer of Stinson Beach, Muir Beach, and Marin Headlands state parks. Mount Tamalpais was to remain in the state park system, and the legislation gave the governor the discretion to shift Angel Island, Haslett Warehouse, and San Francisco Maritime State Historical Park to federal jurisdiction. Although the state did not keep everything, it kept its most important Bay Area state park, Mount Tamalpais and shed the enormous financial responsibility of the upkeep of historic ships. "I feel better now," observed California State Parks Director Herbert Rhodes, who vociferously objected to any transfer in 1975.⁹⁹

Among the many places included in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco Maritime Museum enjoyed a unique position. One of Phil Burton's earliest triumphs helped create an independent history for the park. After losing an assembly seat to a dead man as a result of political machinations in 1954, Burton ran a grassroots campaign for the seat vacated by the death. One of his credentials, the *San Francisco Examiner* noted, was his successful effort to secure \$200,000 to support the San Francisco Maritime Museum, an independent nonprofit museum in a city-owned structure. The museum owned the ship *Balclutha* and the tug *Eppleton Hall* and displayed exhibits at Hyde Street Pier, owned by the city of San Francisco. The San Francisco Maritime State Historical Park owned other historic ships and exhibitions on the pier. When the original Golden Gate National Recreation Area bill was in subcommittee, Burton strained his credibility to include the maritime museum. A subcommittee consultant warned him never to buy ships; such a purchase indicated a wasteful expenditure to the appropriations committee. Burton included the museum in the bill simply by drawing it inside the boundaries, excluding any mention of its contents. The San Francisco Maritime State Historical Park was added to Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1977, the San Francisco Maritime Museum in 1978.¹⁰⁰

Initial efforts at expansion south of Golden Gate National Recreation Area also met considerable local resistance. As early as 1973, Congressman Leo Ryan expressed dismay that San Mateo County had been excluded from the initial Golden Gate National Recreation Area proclamation. Although he recognized that the circumstances did not favor inclusion in 1973, he believed that within a few years, persuasive leadership might sway local opposition to favor an addition to the park. In May 1975, PFGGNRA and the National Park Service made public a proposal for a huge addition to Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The proposed land acquisition stretched from the park's existing southern boundary near Pacifica down the coast past Half Moon Bay and the San Mateo County line, extending nearly all the way to Santa Cruz. The more than 170,000 acres proposed would give Golden Gate National Recreation Area or "Golden Gate National Seashore," as some proponents labeled the project, control of almost 150 miles of coast. Although the proposed additions looped around the existing villages and Whalen regarded the cost as "in the \$100 million class," making its completion unlikely at best, the announcement sparked local resistance up and down the coast.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Larry Liebert, "A Compromise on Bay Park Control," *PS*, June 15, 1976; "Brown Signs Bill to Shift Parks Control," *SFC*, July 10, 1976; "Feds to Take Over Stinson State Beach," *PRL*, July 22, 1976.

¹⁰⁰ Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 54, 437; the *Balclutha*, a steel hulled square-rigger, was launched in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1886. After a varied career at sea, the 301-foot, three-masted ship was purchased by the Maritime Museum for \$25,000 in 1954. The steam sidewheel tug *Eppleton Hall* was built in England in 1914. The 100-foot long tug was powered by a 500 hp twin "Grasshopper" steam engine.

¹⁰¹ Homer Rouse to Associate Director, Legislation, April 5, 1973, CCF, Box 1, L-1417, V 1, 12/1/72-7/3/73,

San Mateo County became a test case for the conservation coalition crucial to the founding of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Advocates had tremendous success in affluent Marin County and hoped that it would translate into similar support. It did not work out that way. "The essential thing to understand about San Mateo," Amy Meyer recalled from the vantage point of nearly thirty years, "is the contrast with Marin County San Mateo was not threatened in the same way at that time." Marin County "had a conservation community," Edgar Wayburn observed, "a developing one." Different demographics produced a different response. "I choose to believe," Wayburn observed, that San Mateo lacked the "conservation ethic which has grown up in Marin County" and the Bay Area. "The people in San Mateo County freaked out," Meyer continued. "We were trying to add about 220,000 acres in one huge gulp. And it was far too much for anyone to digest."¹⁰²

The proposal fueled an already tense situation. The efforts at planning that produced results in San Francisco and Marin County stalled in Pacifica to the south. In San Francisco proper, the need for planning was obvious to all. Without it no recreational space would exist. Neighborhoods joined together with labor and ethnic groups there to support preserving open areas. In Marin County, the white-collar invasion that followed 1945 led to prerogative protection—what a later generation would call NIMBY—as well as support for parklands as protection from inundation. But in traditionally blue-collar Pacifica, concerns about open space and parks only inspired suspicion, even as the area dealt with the threat that the Bay Area loved to hate, freeway development. When the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission policy committee recommendations that open areas on the coast be reserved from development and road construction were followed within a week by the announcement of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area expansion proposal, coastal San Mateo County felt that it was being cut out of an opportunity for growth and prosperity to meet the demands of its more affluent neighbors to the north and its prosperous residents along the Highway 101/280 corridor. This was a typical refrain, a response by those who had yet to enjoy the full benefit of postwar prosperity against those who had made their money and now appeared to be trying to stop others from doing the same. Environmentalism, which included national park expansion, became the leverage point of a great deal of that tension. The *Pacifica Tribune*, a county newspaper, pointed out that residents lived in "the midst of, and on the scene of, an environmental revolution" and that such revolutions were not "one-sided joys." Individual prerogative meant freedom in 1970s America, but communities who exercised any opportunity to grow ran afoul of those who favored restraint. The Bay Area organizations that protected community ways of life had much power; the juxtaposition of their objectives and those of San Mateo County were prelude to great tensions.¹⁰³

Some of the strain could be directly attributed to the earlier successes of PFGGNRA and its leadership's occasionally heavy-handed and self-assured style. By all accounts, Ed Wayburn and Amy Meyer were opposites. Wayburn was a formal and cordial Southerner while Meyer was New York City born and bred and had the tenacity often associated with its natives. They made a devastating team, but the self-assured way that they sometimes operated could alienate even their

Acquisition of Land, General; Dale Champion, "First Steps Toward Huge Coastline Park," *SFC*, May 16, 1975.

¹⁰² Amy Meyer, interview with Stephen Haller, February 25, 2002, 18-19; Edgar Wayburn, interview by Ann Lage and Susan Schrepfer, 1976-1981, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 19-20.

¹⁰³ "Two More Plans Tell How to Plan the Coast," *PT*, May 21, 1975.

friends. Before the proposal to expand to the south of San Francisco debuted, PFGGNRA had not undertaken sufficient local legwork down the coast. One explanation was that in the giddiness their success inspired, Wayburn and Meyer could not imagine that anyone, anywhere, might oppose an extension. Perhaps reading too much into their initial success, PFGGNRA pushed forward, only to encounter some close allies who thought the proposal did not satisfy local needs or duplicated state or county efforts. Betty Hughes, secretary of the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, critiqued the expansion to Wayburn. In such situations, "we, the public, wind up with a few scraps of land and forest instead of a truly significant saving of new lands in national protection," she wrote. Instead of adding existing parks to Golden Gate National Recreation Area, PFGGNRA should try to acquire lands without park status. "How presumptuous of your committee to try to envelop more than a hundred miles of land" in the extension, Hughes exclaimed.¹⁰⁴

PFGGNRA's rapid push to fill out the park splintered the natural constituency that favored expansion and gave ammunition to anti-park groups. Hughes' stance posed problems for PFGGNRA because conservation organizations were precisely the allies needed to expand the park. The oversight of San Mateo County activists during planning meant that local residents sometimes bristled about do-gooding outsiders. Although Wayburn's charm could contain much of that damage, resentment fueled local opponents. One group put out a widely circulated flier that voiced every rural landholder's nightmare: "Warning: Your Land and Home Are in Danger of Being Confiscated for Use as a National Park." More than a decade and a half before the "takings" revolution—the articulation of the principle that even with the power of eminent domain, the government had no legal standing to take property and compensate for it in the name of the public good—took shape, these very sentiments were located firmly at the core of a key anti-park coalition.¹⁰⁵

Although PFGGNRA typically responded to such challenges by marshaling a long line of public supporters with diverse but tightly reasoned rationales, the extension southward developed into a question of relative political influence. Congressman Paul McCloskey, who represented western San Mateo County, came to his district to sell the project. He faced 200 angry constituents at one meeting in San Gregorio. A special hearing of the La Honda–Pescadero School Board erupted when 400 people jeered the pro-park presentation and hooted presenters off the stage, inspiring an impromptu rally that led to the founding of "People Against a Golden Gate National Recreation Area." James Fitzgerald, chairman of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, went to Washington, D.C. to make the county's case. Although McCloskey, Rep. Leo Ryan from the San Mateo area, and Phil Burton all tried to reassure everyone that the extension could not occur without their input, local residents simply did not believe him. The resistance was fierce.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Betty Hughes to Edgar Wayburn, May 23, 1975, PFGGNRA I, Box 14, PFGGNRA - Legislative Proposals Boundary Revisions 1974-1976.

¹⁰⁵ "Warning: Your Land and Home Are in Danger of Being Confiscated for Use as a National Park," n.d., PFGGNRA I, Box 14, PFGGNRA - Legislative Proposals Boundary Revisions 1974-1976.

¹⁰⁶ PFGGNRA, "Golden Gate National Recreation Area South," June 1, 1975; PFGGNRA, "Golden Gate National Recreation Area South," September 12, 1975; "PFGGNRA, "Land - San Mateo County," ca. September 1975; PFGGNRA, "Golden Gate National Recreation Area South Proposal," ca. September 1975, all PFGGNRA I, Box 15, PFGGNRA - Regional Group - Articles etc Re: 1975 Expansion; "Extend Golden Gate Area to the South?" *The Country Almanac*, November 5, 1975; "Open Space Extension Rapped," *PAT*, November 1, 1975; "Golden Gate

Ryan's introduction of a bill to study the park expansion proposal did little to quell local opposition. The bill proposed a study of the feasibility of enlargement, something opponents should have favored. Ryan announced that his measure enjoyed the endorsement of PFGGNRA, the Sierra Club, and the National Park Service. The coastal communities raised an uproar. La Honda-Pescadero, which feared the disappearance of its taxable land base, resisted most vociferously. Three separate organizations formed there to fight the endorsement. Ryan had clearly misjudged public opinion. When he addressed a meeting of the San Mateo county supervisors, he was interrupted by hostile ranchers and jeered throughout the meeting. His pronouncement that he would only support the inclusion of lands that the study recommended did little to pacify the hostile crowd. "My family has been six generations on the same land," said Homer McCurry, whose property abutted the Santa Cruz County line announced at the meeting. "We will be there when the government comes and we will not be moved by anything."¹⁰⁷

Throughout San Mateo County, park proponents faced a hard core of rural sentiment that opposed government intervention in any aspect of their lives. Many of these California areas remained largely untouched by postwar growth and the rights revolution of the 1950s and 1960s seemed only a threat to local people. While PFGGNRA regarded park expansion as an enormous public good, a project that benefited all, local residents felt they were being forced to pay with their property to benefit their urban neighbors. Where Wayburn and Meyer saw public protection of lifestyles in the bill, residents saw the dismantling of their communities and the culture that underpinned them. The proposed 1975 San Mateo County expansion ran hard against a major fault line in American society.

Pronounced local opposition doomed any southern expansion in the mid-1970s, a harbinger of the kind of resistance park growth soon faced in other areas. "We wonder just how much parkland we can afford," an editorial in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* asked, linking cost to quality of life, a relationship already on the cusp of gaining widespread following in American society. "It is not difficult to understand," a *San Mateo Times* editorial explained, "the critical and even hostile reception" to the proposal. The combination of opposition to the 6,000-acre expansion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area in Marin County and the San Mateo resistance slowed the efforts of PFGGNRA to expand the park outside the urban region. When rural populations felt threatened by government and as long as the state could fund the range of services Californians had come to expect of their government, efforts to expand the park looked to local residents all too much like a raid on the country by the city.¹⁰⁸

In the city of San Francisco, a different constellation of circumstances made additional parkland more compelling to local interests. By 1975, San Francisco had completed the initial

Recreation," *The Country Almanac*, November 12, 1975.

¹⁰⁷ "Ryan Introduces Bill to Study Mammoth Park for Coastside Area," *Half Moon Bay Review*, November 13, 1975.

¹⁰⁸ William H. Whalen to Mrs. J. H. Poinsett, January 7, 1976, PFGGNRA I 1972-1984, Box 3, GGNRA - Subjects - Correspondence; "How Many Parks?" SCS, November 28, 1975; "Unwise Proposal on GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA Recreation Area," *San Mateo Times*, November 28, 1975; R, Allen Zink, Kristin M. Clark, William B. Grant, "An Analysis of Development and Counter Development Pressures: A Study of California's Half Moon Bay Coastal Region," (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford Research Institute, 1975); "Park Expansion Bill Dropped," *MJ*, February 5, 1976; "Too Much Land," *PRL*, February 5, 1976; Dave Mitchell, "Crowd Decries Land-Buy Plans," *PRL*, February 5, 1976; Alice Yarish, "GGNRA: Egg on the Face," *PS*, February 6-12, 1976.

stage of full-scale downtown redevelopment. Work on the area south of Market Street was under way, but the project, the Yerba Buena Center, was in deep financial trouble as a result of a host of anti-development lawsuits. Barred by law from seeking a third term as mayor, Joseph Alioto gave way to George Moscone, a new-style ethnic politician who previously served in the state senate and conceived of his constituency in a broad fashion. Moscone led the way to more inclusive local politics, valuing neighborhood power over development dollars and railing against the Manhattanization of San Francisco. In essence, Moscone was a kind of urban populist, tied to the grassroots with faith in government as a remedy for social ills. He embraced the principle that all groups were minorities, an idea that made mutual tolerance and cooperation the only workable strategy. Moscone decentralized power and distributed it back to the grassroots, especially to the neighborhoods. His election proved an advantage for PFGGNRA and the coalitions that favored expansion of parklands in San Francisco.¹⁰⁹

By September 1976, one of the primary goals of initial expansion and boundary revision efforts approached completion. California Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill approving the transfer of the state holdings around Hyde Street Pier to Golden Gate National Recreation Area as the summer ended. The city kept ownership of the pier and leased it to the Park Service. Whalen announced that the Park Service intended to assume administration before the year ended. The transfer included Hyde Street Pier and its collection of historic ships and Haslett Warehouse. The city ceded Aquatic Park and its bathhouse. "For the first time, all of the public holdings between Fort Mason and Fisherman's Wharf" Whalen effused, "will be brought together for a major recreational and historical complex." Haslett Warehouse still contained more than 100 tenants, and the San Francisco Maritime Museum Association, which owned the *Balclutha*, the *Eppleton Hall*, and an extensive museum collection, still needed to make a formal donation of its holdings to the government. Observers expected the financially strapped organization to rush to formalize the transfer, but almost two years passed before the association signed the papers. The San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park was transferred to Golden Gate National Recreation Area on September 16, 1977.¹¹⁰

The 1978 addition of parcel four of Playland, an old amusement park, typified the kind of adaptive use of out-of-date urban space at which Golden Gate National Recreation Area excelled. Begun in the 1920s as a local amusement park, Playland-at-the-Beach became a landmark, a recreational place with memories for generations of Bay Area residents. By the 1960s, like many similar attractions, it fell on hard times and closed in 1972. Playland was located on prime beachfront property and with the demise of the amusement park, developers eagerly eyed its economic potential. In April 1972, the Seal Rock Development Company announced plans for 900 units of condominiums and high-rises. In June 1972, the planning commission gave approval for 724 units and 230,000 square feet of commercial space. In December, the approval was trimmed to 710 units and 178,000 square feet of commercial space. The planning commission was only the first hurdle for the developers in the maze of regulation. As a result of its beachfront location the state's Coastal Commission also had to rule on the project. In June 1973, it approved 660 dwelling units and 151,000 square feet of commercial

¹⁰⁹ Chester Hartman, *The Transformation of San Francisco* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1984), 135-37; Richard Edward DeLeon, *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 13-22.

¹¹⁰ Dale Champion, "U.S. Takeover Planned for Aquatic Park Area," *SFC*, September 4, 1976.

space. By 1977, trimmed in size and scope and subjected to five years of repeated analysis, the development stalled. Much of the public rejoiced as the developers ran out of money.¹¹¹

In the aftermath of the creation of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the public viewed the conversion of recreational space into private commercial and residential space with trepidation. Even though Playland had never been free, commercial development of the site was hugely unpopular with the public. The creation of Golden Gate National Recreation Area made the public keenly aware of both the advantages of urban recreational space and the acute shortage of such areas. Playland seemed to achieve its highest use as public recreational space, and petition after petition favored its inclusion in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Burton's support was enlisted, and Playland became part of the expansion efforts. Burton guided the acquisition to fruition and the part of the old amusement park joined the new national recreation area. Condos eventually were built on the rest.

Despite such successes, the expansion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco became a political issue, full of the jockeying associated with local, state, and federal relationships. Mid-1970s inflation began to drain the resources of even communities as large as San Francisco. Especially in California, with its very high public expectations of government services, costs spiraled out of control. Local leaders pointed to tax-exempt federal lands as a remedy for financial woes. If those lands could be taxed or returned to taxable status, many of the problems of local communities could be solved. President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Dianne Feinstein followed this line of reasoning. She argued against further federal expansion in the city because it compromised property tax revenues. By 1978, fifty-one percent of the land in San Francisco was tax exempt; the federal government owned thirty-five percent of all government-held land in the city. In Feinstein's view, running an American city in the late 1970s without the revenue from half of the property tax base was at best ludicrous. In San Francisco, city officials felt increasingly threatened by the growth of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

In Marin County in 1976 and 1977, similar circumstances produced very different results. Even before Marinello, Marin County had become the scene of what a later generation labeled "gentrification." When rural Marin County—the old dairy ranches and other agricultural and ranching operations—survived, they did so in two netherworlds controlled by outside forces. In one the federal government, increasingly in the guise of the Park Service, served as an important barrier to wholesale change. Golden Gate National Recreation Area's presence increased land values, but it filled up enough space that the kind of wholesale development exemplified by Marinello was only occasionally possible. In most instances, the rising cost of land drove housing prices skyward and made it economically unfeasible for developers to convert tracts of land into subdivisions. The other outside force comprised "neonatives," typically wealthy residents of the Bay Area who bought land in Marin County for a retreat, second home, or sometimes to commute, changing by their presence the very paradise they sought. The prototype for such people was William Kent at the turn of the twentieth century, an idealistic and concerned citizen who valued public space over private prerogative.¹¹² The interests of these

¹¹¹ Janis MacKenzie, "New Plans for Playland," *San Francisco Business*, October 1978; Russ Cone, "Feinstein Raps Playland Proposal," *SFE*, May 12, 1978.

¹¹² Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 1-27; Stephen R. Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1981), 134-38.

neonatives often coincided with those of longtime rural residents, and the neonatives' wealth, power, and social and political sophistication helped serve as a drag against wholesale and unchecked change.

John Jacobs of San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association (SPUR) provided one illustration of the powerful and complicated role of neonatives. Jacobs' park credentials were impeccable. He resisted the federal government's attempt to place the National Archives branch at Fort Miley. The facility was eventually located at San Bruno. His Republican Party ties helped bring about the establishment of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and he offered tacit support as Amy Meyer and her friends never stopped trying to expand the park. By late 1975, they sought to fill a gap in the heart of Marin County between Samuel P. Taylor State Park, Point Reyes Station, White House Pool, and Olema by adding the Cheda Ranch area, Lagunitas Creek Loop, and Olema Valley Meadow. The extension provided better continuity of parkland on the Marin County coast and had been a goal beyond the reach of PFGGNRA in 1972. Jacobs and his wife were also partners in the Mesa Ranch just north of Bolinas, in the area that PFGGNRA coveted for the park. With what Jacobs called "the full realization that success...might doom our chances for a vacation home on Bolinas Mesa," he and his associates, led by managing partner Anton G. Holter, agreed that the ranch belonged in Golden Gate National Recreation Area.¹¹³

The 210-acre Bolinas ranch and the nearby 1,100-acre RCA property became one of the foci of local backlash. Local opponents claimed that inclusion in the park of these tracts would damage the agricultural base of rural Marin County, but Holter rejected that claim, stating "frankly, I don't think these people are farmers. Writers, lawyers, teachers, architects, and gardeners, yes." The opposition came from neonatives who preceded Holter and Jacobs into the area, similar amenity migrants drawn to the area for precisely the same reasons as the Mesa Ranch owners but with a different sense of individual prerogative and social objectives. Although Jacobs thought that opponents sought 50- to 100-acre ranchettes on adjacent lands, profiting from the presence of the park and the lack of development to offer tracts that only the wealthy could afford, more likely they simply wanted to pull up the figurative ladder to the exclusive tree house of Marin County after they entered. In this sense, Jacobs and Holter could see public purpose more clearly than neighboring landowners.¹¹⁴ The struggle over Jacobs' land and the RCA property revealed how class, wealth, and perspective could alter the relationships between natives, neonatives, and newcomers. Questions of land use contained the potential to crack existing alliances.

Despite the stance of Jacobs and Holter, HR 10398, the bill they supported, failed to reach the floor of the U.S. House. John Burton introduced it in December 1975, and held hearings in Marin County early in 1976. At a February 2, 1976 public meeting sponsored by the Rural Forum, a Marin County group dedicated to preserving rural life in the region, opponents shredded the proposal. Although the presumption that landowners supported the bill underpinned Burton's introduction of the measure, all but one resident who addressed the meeting opposed it.

¹¹³ Amy Meyer to Jerry Friedman, January 25, 1976, PFGGNRA I, Box 14, PFGGNRA Legislative Proposals/ Boundary Revisions 1974-1976; Hartman, *The Transformation of San Francisco*, 139-40; Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 211-14.

¹¹⁴ Amy Meyer and Bob Young, "Some Thoughts Regarding [*sic*] the Marin RCA Properties," October 8, 1975; John H. Jacobs to Cong. John Burton, November 14, 1975; Anton Holter to Cong. John Burton, November 20, 1975; Amy Meyer to Jerry Friedman, January 25, 1976, all PFGGNRA I, Box 14, PFGGNRA Legislative Proposals/ Boundary Revisions 1974-1976.

Opponents spoke loudly and vociferously against the bill, while its advocates offered only muted support. "You're taking all the property where it is feasible to build a motel," complained Don DeWolfe of Point Reyes Station. Another opponent called the purchase a rip-off of taxpayers. Before the meeting, Amy Meyer authored a justification for the bill that she circulated to Marin County officials through Jerry Friedman, one of the planning commissioners. She made a "heroic effort at defense," a report observed, "but was clearly outgunned." Even Friedman and other supporters sounded lukewarm in the face of angry voters.¹¹⁵

Despite the rout at the hearing, powerful influences in Marin County remained ambivalent about park extension. Although local newspapers did object to the bill, they recognized the expansion as a bulwark against suburbanization and undesirable growth. The *Point Reyes Light* opined that the 6,000 acres included in the bill were too much for the park, but noted that "probably the strongest argument for the proposal was unfortunately overlooked" at the hearing. "Agriculture in West Marin is on the wane. It won't be all dead in five years. It probably will be in 50." In the scenario the newspaper suggested, as the demise of agriculture accelerated, few options existed. One was subdivision, a pattern resisted among Marin residents and county officials. If governmental agencies such as Marin County blocked subdivisions, the paper believed, then they would be obligated to buy the land. If the county purchased these expensive tracts instead of the federal government, the financial consequences for the Marin County taxpayers seemed immense. After assessing the powerfully negative local sentiment, John Burton withdrew the bill.¹¹⁶

This political ambivalence characterized questions of land acquisition in Marin County. Powerful advocates sought inclusion of much of West Marin in the park, but many of those supporters were from the San Francisco side of the bay. Amy Meyer, Ed Wayburn, John Jacobs, and Anton Holter were typical. They inspired some local resentment, but also found allies in Marin; Friedman, the Marin County planning commissioner who had helped found Headlands Inc., was typical. HR 10398 seemed a misguided proposition. In retrospect, the bill came forward without enough input from local constituencies. In one account after the demise, Alice Yarish of the *Pacific Sun* suggested that none of the landowners were included in the discussions leading up to the bill. While the statement was arguably hyperbole, it also clearly articulated the resentment of local landowners. By the mid-1970s, fears of government action were widespread and rural communities especially felt threatened. When they heard the park expansion proposal at the meeting, many residents were upset; a few were enraged.¹¹⁷ Many resisted, some for personal reasons, some for economic ones, but the opposition made the going too rough for John Burton. In his first term as congressman, he wisely followed the loudest group of constituents. His older brother might have played the situation differently, but John Burton was not yet as adept a political power broker as Phil Burton.

The defeat barely deterred PFGGNRA, and Amy Meyer made Marin County one of her primary objectives. Within one year, Meyer and Bob Young circulated a new set of justifications for acquiring the same properties. Meyer was indefatigable; she repackaged the initial proposal with a new rationale and even added recommendations for additional, more expensive land.

¹¹⁵ Amy Meyer to Jerry Friedman, January 25, 1976, PFGGNRA I, Box 14, PFGGNRA Legislative Proposals/ Boundary Revisions 1974-1976; Dave Mitchell, "Crowd Decries Land-Buy Plans," *PRL*, February 5, 1976.

¹¹⁶ "Too Much Land," *PRL*, February 5, 1976; "Park Expansion Bill is Dropped," *MLJ*, February 5, 1976.

¹¹⁷ Alice Yarish, "GGNRA: Egg on the Face," *PS*, February 6, 1976.

Meyer divided the land in question into two basic categories. The first encompassed the roughly 4,000 acres of the year before; the second contained about 2,000 acres that were more controversial. Her proposal included privately owned ranches, some private residences and businesses, part of the town of Olema, and several other parcels. The threat of development underpinned Meyer's desire for acquisition. Holter, Meyer claimed, planned a 200-unit hotel on the Mesa Ranch because of his unsuccessful efforts to sell the land to the park system. The Cheda Ranch, owned by a real estate company, faced imminent development. The entire package, Meyer thought, could be acquired for between \$13 million and \$15 million.¹¹⁸

Despite the seeming redundancy of the proposal, the idea received a wide hearing that did more than reprise the tension of the previous year. John Burton was able to position himself as an advocate for the county in a manner he could not the year before. The change from Republican to Democratic administration with the election of Jimmy Carter in 1976 gave the Democratic congressman more clout. During the six years following the creation of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Phil Burton consolidated his power and made a run for speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives. Although Burton failed to win the speaker's gavel, he retained tremendous influence within the institution, another boon for his younger and more compliant brother. John Burton found common ground with his Marin County constituency over a perceived slight by the Ford administration. On the day before Carter's inauguration, Ford's secretary of the interior, Tom Kleppe, appointed a new Golden Gate NRA Citizen's Advisory Committee that included only one Marin County rancher, Joe Mendoza, who served from 1974 to 1980. John Burton told a February 13, 1977 meeting at Point Reyes Station that the "appointments were legal [but] they weren't moral." He promised he would defend the county's interests and work toward a solution that met everyone's needs.¹¹⁹

Throughout 1977, the debate raged across Marin County. A new series of public hearings took place in which the acquisition was debated. By the fall, a loose consensus appeared to be coalescing. On September 13, 1977, the *Pacific Sun* reported a proposed 15,000-acre expansion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area drew "hardly a murmur" at the Marin County Board of Supervisors. As the consensus emerged, the lands of the few individual landowners who did not want to sell were excluded. The focus shifted away from questions of acquisition to remedies for problems, such as loss of tax revenue, that federal ownership might create. By October, John Burton had sufficient local support to proceed.¹²⁰

The coalition John Burton assembled in Marin County to encourage the expansion of GGNRA came together as Phil Burton embarked on a campaign aimed at redefining reform politics in the U.S. House. By most accounts, Burton perceived power in a different manner after he lost the Speaker position by a razor-thin margin. After he regrouped, he recognized new realities: if he could not be the leader and if he was shut out of the power structure, he still could be an influential player. While Burton did not win the position he coveted, he emerged from the political fray with most of his power intact, more determined to achieve his goals and equally well positioned even after the close defeat. Always a master political strategist, Burton grasped

¹¹⁸ George Nevin, "Conservationists' Proposal to Expand Federal Lands," *MIJ*, January 7, 1977; "Burton on Park Buy," *PRL*, January 13, 1977.

¹¹⁹ "Burton Talks Park," *PRL*, February 17, 1977; Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 22-26, 249-328, 589-616; Richard H. Bartke to Steve Haller, March 5, 2002.

¹²⁰ "What, No Argument?" *PS*, September 16, 1977; "More Park Debated," *PRL*, September 23, 1977.

the levers of political coalition-building more completely. Following his always savvy political instincts, Burton functioned as a different kind of power broker. His efforts recycled an existing political form—the local demands for “pork” catered to by the old Water Buffaloes—and put it in a new setting. Burton became the person who put together unstoppable public works coalitions; national park areas became the linchpin of that strategy.¹²¹

The national political climate changed dramatically in the late 1970s, and Phil Burton was an unlikely person to intuit, understand, and capitalize on the changes. The Great Aberration, the period of time between 1945 and 1974 when more Americans did better economically than ever before and that created deceptive views of the American norm, came to an end in the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) oil crisis and the resulting explosion of global inflation. The end of postwar prosperity hit at once, best epitomized by the rising cost of gasoline for which the nation stood in line in 1974. In an instant, the pillars of postwar American prosperity—cheap energy, rising value of wages, and low inflation—came crashing down. President Gerald Ford and his WIN—Whip Inflation Now—button were the best response the nation could muster. Beginning in 1974, the United States entered a twenty-three-year period that in essence represented a regression to a less generally prosperous American mean.¹²²

California, which had been regarded as the chief proprietor of the American Dream, felt the hit as hard as anywhere. Postwar prosperity in California brought with it a state-run vision of a Great Society that paralleled Lyndon B. Johnson’s hopes for the nation. The state became a seemingly independent entity that made its own rules and paid its own way. It offered students free, community college education, low tuition at a two-tiered but generally outstanding university system, and a range of medical, health, and personal options, all funded by the Sacramento government. State taxes were high, but the quality of life made it all worthwhile. Although critics often bashed the state as a socialistic entity, Californians generally adored their paradise. But its future depended on a large influx of ongoing revenues, and after 1975, as the world economy shifted and California experienced a decline in financial resources, the California miracle started to fray at the edges.

The catalyst that upset the State of California’s relationship to its citizens came from Howard Jarvis, a retired lobbyist for apartment building owners, and his successful efforts to cap property taxes. Between 1973 and 1978, California real estate values soared. For many this was a benefit of epic proportions, but these unearned increments seemed equally unreal and unstable. With an attendant rise in property tax payments, the increments hurt some sectors of homeowners, especially retirees and those on a fixed income. The California legislature could not agree on property tax relief legislation at a time when the cost of homes—and their tax bills—soared. In 1976, Governor Jerry Brown held onto billions in tax surpluses instead of returning them to a groaning public. Public grumbling mounted, and calls to divest the state of its power grew louder. In this climate, Jarvis and his compatriot Paul Gann seized on a formula to cripple state government and return billions of dollars to taxpayers. They sponsored a ballot initiative to roll back property taxes to 1975 levels. Called Proposition 13, the initiative quite simply threatened the California way of life that was intrinsically tied to postwar prosperity.

¹²¹ Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 295-326.

¹²² Hal K. Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the U.S. Since 1945* (New York: Harbrace Books, 1997).

When Proposition 13 passed in June 1978, it represented a watershed moment in California history. Revenues of counties and municipalities decreased dramatically and local programs that many valued soon came to a halt. Surpluses continued at the state level, but the state had to provide block grants that replaced the lost local revenue so that services could continue. In effect, Proposition 13 shifted local burdens to the state, which negated most increases in state revenue in subsequent years. This redistribution capped the tax dollars in the state in the short-term, shifting the load from stable property taxes to regressive taxes such as sales tax. Californians expected no less from their government and most cared little how the money was raised – as long as homeowners did not have to bear the brunt.¹²³ Instead of residing in a state where people paid for the vast array of services they received, Californians became the progenitors of the national “Me, Me, Me, Now, Now, Now” culture of the end of the twentieth century.

Proposition 13 quickly changed the climate in the state so dramatically that state agencies looked to jettison programs, and state parks suffered. Cities, counties, and special districts abjured all sorts of responsibilities and severely cut back almost everything. Classroom seats and infrastructure were all heavily affected. School districts, often dependent on property tax, were trampled by increases in student enrollment and reductions in funding. The state tried to use its surpluses to overcome the losses, slashing state parks and wildlife, and responsible leaders cast about for relief from the financial storm. In desperate straits, communities looked for answers, and in the United States in the late 1970s, only the federal government appeared as a solution.

The California state park system experienced notable difficulties as an indirect result of Proposition 13. Californians thought of their state parks as equals of the national park system in scenery and beauty, and anyone standing atop Mount Tamalpais would be hard-pressed to disagree. William Penn Mott’s strong stance against transfer of state lands to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area stemmed from that very sense of California exceptionalism. In the post-Proposition 13 climate, and especially after the Jarvis–Gann bill, also known as Jarvis II, which planned to cut California state income tax by fifty percent, his point of view became untenable. Without tax revenues, the state park department simply could not maintain its properties. The California Department of Parks and Recreation transferred three parks to federal government, granting \$1 billion of value in a lease that required only \$1 each year. The decision revealed a dramatic shift in the role of the state. Not five years before, Mott fought NPS efforts to add state parks to Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Redwood National Park. In 1975, a state park support group opposed uncompensated transfer of state lands to the federal system. In 1976, a study asserted that California’s parks were best managed by the state and it proposed a “Golden Gateway State Urban Park” instead of transfer to federal hands. After Howard Jarvis’ bill, without resources, the state quietly shelved any such plans and became amenable to the Park Service’s management of the parkland.¹²⁴

The city of San Francisco and other urban entities faced the same constraints as the state. Mayor Dianne Feinstein faced a crisis at Golden Gate Park that stemmed directly from the loss of revenue as a result of property tax caps. At the same time, federal dollars for the development

¹²³ Jeffrey I. Chapman, “Proposition 13: Some Unintended Consequences,” Public Policy Institute of California, Tenth Annual Envisioning California Conference, 1-13; Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 403-04; Hartman, *The Transformation of San Francisco*, 235-36; Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Verso, 1990), 180-86.

¹²⁴ Carl Irving, “3 Redwood State Parks Worth \$1 Billion Will Go to Feds,” *SFE*, June 27, 1978.

of McLaren Park, a "plum from the federal money tree," as observers called the support, showed the direction in which the power had shifted. The lesson was not lost on either Feinstein or any other local or state politician in California. Jarvis-Gann, the plan that cut California's income tax in half, took away the state resources that provided precisely the public services that the public most appreciated. Fiercely strapped, local and state entities looked to agencies in Washington, D.C. for more help than they had since the New Deal.

Jarvis-Gann created an opening for Phil Burton that the congressmen used to his advantage. If California, one of the wealthiest states in the Union, would not support its parks, Burton could arrange for the federal government to step in and take them over. This had two enormous political advantages: it brought home millions of dollars in federal largesse for which Burton alone was responsible and it protected the recreational prerogatives of people who believed in their entitlement to the good life. Ousted as House majority whip by his loss in the speaker's race and cut out of the power structure by Reps. Tip O'Neill, Dan Rostenkowski, and Jim Wright, Burton needed another strategy to maintain power in the House. Recognizing that countering the impact of Jarvis-Gann by transfer of responsibility gave him a template that could be applied in other places, Burton began to assemble the most complex piece of legislation in national park history.

Formally titled the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, but colloquially known as the Omnibus Bill of 1978, Burton's legislative masterpiece created the park system's greatest single expansion. Passed in time to let representatives receive its largesse before the 1978 elections, the act benefited more than one hundred congressmen and women in forty-four states. The bill included more than one hundred projects; expanded thirty-four individual park areas; added nine historic areas and three parks; tripled the size of the national wilderness system; created five national trails and eight wild and scenic rivers; and authorized the study of seventeen other river segments for possible inclusion in the national park system. Although Burton's detractors called the bill a naked power play designed to put the congressman back into the House Democratic power structure, the bill did much more.¹²⁵ It shaped a legacy for one of the last of a political breed, a congressman who specialized in bringing home the bacon but in a different form than did the Water Buffaloes of the previous generation. Where the projects of leaders such as Wayne Aspinall benefited people by giving contracts to special interests under the guise of widespread benefit, Burton's efforts forged recreational and reflective space for an increasingly crowded nation.

At Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Phil Burton's personal favorite project, the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 formalized the acquisitions that had been under discussion in Marin County for the better part of the decade and provided funds to close the purchase of previously authorized lands. The bill targeted for purchase 3,741 acres for Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore in five areas of Marin County, Haggerty Gulch in Inverness Park, land between Samuel P. Taylor State Park and Olema, the Bear Valley triangle near Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters, and Muir Beach. The purchases involved fifty-six property owners and were expected to cost \$15 million. In addition, Golden Gate National Recreation Area also received less than half of Playland, the old amusement park along the Great Highway.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 443-45.

¹²⁶ "Park Bill Signed; 5,739 Acres for Marin," *MLJ*, November 11, 1978; John Fogarty, "House Unit Quickly Passes Burton's Record Parks Bill," John Fogarty, "Projects for State in Big Bill," *SFC*, May 11, 1978; Jacobs, *A*

Passage of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 allowed one more close look at the acquisition plans of the federal government in Marin County. At John Burton's request, the Marin County Board of Supervisors held three public hearings, September 13, September 20, and November 29, 1977, and collected letters and position papers from as many as 300 individuals. The people of Bolinas participated in an advisory poll on November 8, 1977; Board of Supervisors Chairman Gary Giacomini held a public hearing in Bolinas on November 14, 1977; and the board solicited comments and recommendations from a range of city, county, and state government agencies. Although generally willing to support the acquisitions, the board of supervisors sought a number of guarantees. The board accepted the priorities established by the Marin Conservation League, which placed completing park boundaries first, followed by protection of natural resources, recreational needs, and land use values with an emphasis on preserving agricultural land, and strongly cautioned against transformation of the acquired lands. County representatives believed that leases for continued agricultural use to former landowners would mitigate any negative changes that resulted from the transfer. They also insisted that the county and its townships be fairly compensated for lost tax revenue. In the end, the board agreed that the transfer of Muir Beach, Stinson Beach, the lands between Samuel P. Taylor State Park and Olema, and the Haggerty Gulch should proceed as proposed, but questions about Bolinas and the Lagunitas Loop loomed large. The board sought the inclusion of Bolinas in Point Reyes National Seashore rather than Golden Gate National Recreation Area, believing that the national seashore's management was more in keeping with the nature of life in the area. The input on Lagunitas Loop was split. Local environmentalists and the county planning department opposed inclusion; the county parks and recreation department and PFGGNRA and other broader-based groups supported inclusion. The board recommended compromise. The Giacomini Ranch, a thriving agricultural operation run by a cousin of board chairman Gary Giacomini, remained beyond Park Service reach.¹²⁷

Conservation groups again proved helpful in issues of land acquisition. The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy both had important stakes in the region. Acquisition of The Nature Conservancy tracts, Marincello and Slide Ranch, required negotiation with that organization. The more expensive of the two, Marincello, seemed most likely to be purchased in pieces. The Park Service agreed to acquire Slide Ranch at The Nature Conservancy's cost with reasonable overhead in exchange for Conservancy donation of the Wheelwright property and the purchase cost of Marincello. In mid-1973, while the battle for administration appropriation raged, the Park Service could muster \$336,000 toward Marincello. At the cost of \$3,860 per acre, the amount specified in The Nature Conservancy's purchase agreement with Gulf Oil, that amount purchased only eighty-seven of the 2,138 available acres.¹²⁸ The acquisition of Marincello seemed an incremental process.

By 1980, the first phase of land acquisition at Golden Gate National Recreation Area was drawing to a close. During the park's first eight years, the Park Service acquired nearly all of the roughly 17,000 acres of private land included in the original proclamation, as well as 2,801 of

Rage for Justice, 363-79; Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 445-56.

¹²⁷ Gary Giacomini to John Burton, November 29, 1977; Gary Giacomini to John Burton, December 5, 1977, PFGGNRA I, Box 9, Marin County Government - Board of Supervisors.

¹²⁸ Lawrence C. Hadley to Director, Western Region, May 3, 1973, CCF, Box 1, L-1425, V 1, November 1972-July 31, 1973, General.

the approximately 4,577 acres held by other federal agencies that had been authorized but not included in the original establishment. In addition, the Army issued the Park Service an irrevocable permit for recreation use and development of shoreline Presidio lands, a decision that amounted to a de facto transfer of 150 acres of waterfront acreage. The initial park statute required that any lands acquired from California be the result of a donation. After a 1978 referendum, the city of San Francisco donated 600 acres, including parts of Playland and city beaches, to the park. The state legislature transferred another 4,710 acres mostly in Marin County. With most of the initial boundary questions resolved and the bulk of the acquisitions of the 1978 Omnibus Bill accomplished, the time had come for a reassessment of park objectives.¹²⁹

As with nearly every other dimension of the first decade of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Phil Burton played an instrumental role in furthering the development of the park. The strategy he developed in 1978 became his signature, a path to exercise power and build consensus while shut out of the House Democratic power structure. It culminated with the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1980, which Arizona Congressman Morris "Mo" Udall called "one of the supreme acts of chutzpah" he had ever seen in the House of Representatives. Burton presented HR 3 as a two-line bill to add a small amount of land to Golden Gate National Recreation Area. He then asked the House for unanimous consent to technical and conforming amendments, typically very short, but in this case seventy-five pages that were the meat of the bill. The legislation Burton passed spent \$70 million and included Channel Islands National Park, the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District in Atlanta, Chaco Culture National Historical Park in New Mexico, the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, New York, \$10 million for Olympic National Park in Washington state, and \$5 million for acquisition of 2,400 acres at Point Reyes National Seashore as well as \$15.5 million for as many as 5,400 acres in San Mateo County for Golden Gate National Recreation Area.¹³⁰ When the bill passed in February 1980, Burton's influence on national park proclamation reached its pinnacle as an era came to an end.

In the history of the role of government in American society, 1980 became a pivotal year, the moment of a clear and evident shift in the conception of federal obligations. Burton's strategy of delivering the bacon to districts across the country had, in one form or another, dominated political negotiation since the New Deal of the 1930s. The combination of rising interest rates, the decline of the industrial and manufacturing economy, and the election of Ronald Reagan on a conservative, anti-government platform in November 1980 spelled the end of Democratic pork-barrel politics. Detractors often referred to Burton's activities as "park-barreling" in an effort to equate them with the pork-barreling for which Congress was famous, but Burton's ability to accomplish his goals depended on a compliant power structure. Even those who detested him and those who railed about excess and unnecessary government spending were charmed by the inclusion of parks for their district.¹³¹ Before 1980, no one—at least no one who wanted to retain a seat in Congress—opposed a project that delivered federal dollars to their home district. The Reagan administration purposely halted Burton's style of bringing home projects for home districts, and the changing economic situation made his strategy obsolete.

¹²⁹ *Land Acquisition Plan, Golden Gate National Recreation Area*, April, 1980, PFGGNRA I, Land Acquisition.

¹³⁰ Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 390-91; Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 440-41.

¹³¹ Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 80-86. Foresta and Richard Sellars are both well known for their criticism of Burton's work as "diluting the stock" of the national parks.

Burton retained both his vision and maneuvering skills in the changing climate. When asked if Golden Gate National Recreation Area was now complete after the passage of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1980, he responded with characteristic aplomb: "Please, I'm headed South." Golden Gate National Recreation Area remained his pet project, his prize, and increasingly his legacy. Even in the dire early years of the Reagan administration, when the famed reduction in force—RIF—hit the federal government when Secretary of the Interior James Watt froze parkland acquisition during the painful recession of 1981 and 1982, and even as Reagan busted PATCO, the air traffic controllers union, Burton pushed for the growth and continued the supple powerbrokering that brought more land to his park. The acts authorizing transfer became law before Reagan was elected. Finding the money after the Reagan administration took office proved a challenge. "How can I accept land in San Mateo when I can't care for what I have?" Whalen asked reporters in the clearest articulation of the problem.¹³²

By 1980, Jarvis-Gann had completely altered the politics of state land preservation in California and the unfunded federal mandates of the Reagan era worsened their situation. The state parks, like so much of the California dream funded by postwar growth, demand huge, ongoing outlays of capital that came from taxes. The property tax and income tax caps sharply impeded the state's ability to fund many of its functions, and the Reagan administration's goal of returning power to the states turned into another obligation that required capital. In essence, the Reagan administration pawned off federal responsibilities on the states without providing the funding to manage the new obligations. California felt the sting in an especially direct way, and instead of resisting federal entreaties, state agencies sought takers for their assets.

In the 1980s, Golden Gate National Recreation Area finally succeeded in growing to the south, eventually including Sweeney Ridge and other lands in San Mateo County. After Jimmy Carter's loss to Reagan in the 1980 election, Democrats in Congress recognized that they faced a new era. A spate of lame duck legislation was hustled through Congress for the President's signature, including the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) on December 2, 1980. Among the pieces of legislation that came through during the brief window was S. 2363, which had been authorized under the National Park Act of 1980 and provided for the expansion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area into San Mateo County. Doug Nadeau, chief of the Division of Resource Management and Planning, initiated meetings with the communities and local residents affected by the new legislation. A Park Service veteran who served at the park from its founding, Nadeau observed the PFGGNRA fiasco in San Mateo in the mid-1970s and recognized the need to learn from earlier mistakes. In a different climate, when communities such as Pacifica actively sought to shed the cost of park and even public property management, Nadeau faced a much easier road than could have been anticipated even three years earlier.¹³³

Phil Burton continued to work the system at every opportunity. He dug deeper into the park to find people who could help him achieve his goals. Prior to 1980, Bob Young, a friend of Amy Meyer, produced very fine detailed working maps that were used to shape the park boundary. After that, "for some reason, Phil discovered me," Doug Nadeau recalled, "and when

¹³² Laurie Itow and Carl Irving, "Reagan Budget Cuts: Shortage of Green for Bay Parklands," *SFE*, March 5, 1981; Dale Champion, "Budget Crunch Threatens National Park Service," *SFC*, February 11, 1981; Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 400; Robinson, "You're in Your Mother's Arms," 433.

¹³³ Doug Nadeau to Gul Ramchandani, December 4, 1980, Box 3, PFGGNRA I, "GGNRA - Subjects, Correspondence"; Nadeau, Doug, interview by John Martini, October 6, 1998, Presidio Oral History project.

he was cooking up a new boundary proposal would describe it verbally and ask me to draw a map. With limited time, I would respond with a quick and dirty Magic Marker un-reproducible original. Weeks later, legislation would appear referring to this mysterious map of unknown origin and location."¹³⁴ Burton's panache kept pressure on Congress for additions to the park.

The freeze on expenditures for land acquisition made consummating the opportunities presented in the last months of the Carter administration a more difficult step than it might have been in other circumstances. Despite the changing economic situation of California, San Mateo County contained a wide group that opposed federally owned parks in the county. Some of this opposition stemmed from characteristic rural resentment of the federal government; other segments recalled the heavy-handed approach of the mid-1970s. A more intellectually dangerous element for the Park Service were those who embraced the nascent philosophy of "Wise Use," a set of ideas derived in part from the Sagebrush Rebellion of the late 1970s that suggested that the federal government lacked the authority to own even designated land within state boundaries. This revival of the older ideas of states' rights, discredited in the Civil War, but remarkably powerful in national culture, fused with discontent about the direction of American society to create a prickly resentment of any federal initiative. Although local and county government willingly ceded land for the expansion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Park Service still treaded gingerly south of San Francisco.¹³⁵

Long-standing relationships with conservation organizations served the NPS well in the move to implement the National Park Act of 1980 and include parts of San Mateo County in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) held an option on Sweeney Ridge, but efforts to transfer it to the park system slowed when the Reagan administration limited park acquisitions. After 1980, the Watt Interior Department aggressively sought to slow national park expansion. Secretarial directive, Watt's favored way of creating policy change through administrative fiat, created a requirement for all parks to prepare a new document called a "Land Protection Plan." Although the concept made clear sense, under Watt, it served to replace land acquisition planning with stasis. The Park Service and advocacy groups regarded the new requirement as a blatant attempt to prevent the expansion of national park areas. In 1981, the park system did not add a new park area for the first year since 1945. In 1982, with Assistant Secretary of the Interior Ray Arnett insisting that every land purchase be reviewed in his office and with Ric Davidge, formerly managing director of the National Inholders Association, a group of people who owned land within national park area boundaries, overseeing land acquisition for the park system, the Department of the Interior spent only half the money Congress allocated for land acquisition.¹³⁶

The new process forced the agency to take a much more complicated approach to land acquisition. It compelled the agency to evaluate every option available to achieve management and preservation goals in addition to outright acquisition in fee for each tract under consideration. In essence, the requirement buried land acquisition in paperwork. At Golden Gate National Recreation Area, local pessimism about the impact of this requirement was quickly dispelled. Golden Gate's Land Protection Plan worked for the park instead of against it. The

¹³⁴ Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

¹³⁵ Rothman, *Saving the Planet*; David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens: The "Wise Use" Movement, The New Right, and Anti-Environmental Violence* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994), 8-12, 118-22.

¹³⁶ Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002; Acting Chief, Division of Land Acquisition, Western Region to Associate Director, Operations, Western Region, March 16, 1981; John H. Davis to A. B. Pace, April 17, 1981, PFGGNRA I, Land Acquisition; Edward Flattau, "National Parks Money Unspent," *MLJ*, December 4, 1982.

national recreation area was the kind of park Watt himself favored – intensely used in all kinds of ways, with only a modicum of restrictions on types of use – and the plan was among the first in the country to receive approval. High-level administrators served as a block against park expansion and TPL and NPS officials met repeatedly to find ways around the predicament. TPL was in the business of acquiring land for public purposes and mere administrative fiat would not change the organization's long-term objectives. The General Services Administration agreed to exchange excess or surplus property until new funding could be secured. Finally, in September 1986, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors gave final approval to the transfer of 287 acres of open space to Golden Gate National Recreation Area.¹³⁷

After 1980, as Golden Gate National Recreation Area became a fixture in the Bay Area and agriculture continued to decline in Marin County, a continuous stream of small properties, typically ranches, were purchased and included in the park. After James Watt's 1983 departure from the Department of the Interior, the Reagan administration eased its strictures against land acquisition. The prospect of the 1984 election turned many Republican congressional representatives back into pork- and park-barrelers, and a plethora of new areas again joined the park system. At Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1983, the 1,065-acre McIsaac Ranch in Marin County was purchased for nearly \$2 million. The McIsaac family received a twenty-five-year leaseback that allowed them to continue to operate their cattle ranch. The agreement came to typify the kinds of concessions NPS officials had to make to complete Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Between the end of 1983 and 1986, 1636.37 acres were purchased for the park. Priorities in Marin County included the Jensen Oyster Company land near Tomales Bay, the nearby Martinelli Ranch that had been sold to a developer but whose plans faced public opposition, and the Gallagher, McFadden, and Genazzi ranches in Lagunitas Loop. Elsewhere, small areas in Sutro Heights and a twelve-acre parcel at Sweeney Ridge owned by the California Department of Transportation, all of which had been authorized under the 1980 park act, rounded out park objectives. The park retained almost \$2.7 million in previously allocated acquisition money, enough for the top six properties on the list. The formidable duo of California senators, Alan Cranston and Pete Wilson, supported a \$3.1 million appropriation to buy the rest.¹³⁸

The process of rounding out Golden Gate National Recreation Area continued and remained a constant feature of park management. Outside organizations made several recommendations. In 1988, the National Parks and Conservation Association identified desirable additions. The purchase of the Genazzi Ranch in 1988 brought the park closer to completing its acquisitions in the Lagunitas Loop. The transfer of Cattle Hill, a 261-acre tract that abutted Sweeney Ridge in Pacifica was completed in 1992, another in the seemingly endless parade of additions that consolidated park boundaries. After a long and complicated battle that took the better part of fifteen years, the Giacomini Ranch was finally included in the park. The inclusion of Phleger Estates near Woodside in the southern portion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1994 seemed to close out a generation-long process.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002; Steven Shelby, "Ridge Land Transfer to Park Service Approval," *DCR*, September 20, 1986.

¹³⁸ "Addendum to Land Protection Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area, February 1986" Regional Director, Western Region to Director, National Park Service, September 3, 1986, SOA, Box 55, L-14, Land Acquisition, Miscellaneous, 1986-1989 Acquisition of Land; Ken White, "Park Changes Priorities for Land Buys Here," *PRL*, August 21, 1986; "'Park Purchase' Powerful Friend," *MJJ*, August 21, 1986.

¹³⁹ Ken White, "Park Buying Genazzi Ranch," *PRL*, September 15, 1988; Elaine Larsen, "Cattle Hill Transfer Almost Complete," *PT*, December 25, 1991; Elaine Larsen, "Cattle Hill to GGNRA; 'Last Hurrah' Vote Angers

Only one acquisition issue remained, but it was the largest and most significant of them all. More than any other piece of property, the transfer of the Presidio to Golden Gate National Recreation Area signified the park's completion. Phil Burton again served as the catalyst. The dynamic congressman lived hard, drinking and smoking with furious intensity. He collapsed and died of a sudden heart attack in the early morning hours of April 9, 1983. His death ended an era, but did not diminish his legacy, of which the primary piece became the transfer of the Presidio in 1994. Without Burton's foresight, the Presidio, one of the most spectacular pieces of property in the United States, would have escaped inclusion in the park system. In the 1970s, long before anyone anticipated the end of the Cold War and the end of a military-based economy, Burton took a bold step that envisioned this prime piece of property as a way of filling out the park, making it genuine urban open space that served the community. Simultaneously, his 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act secured an ongoing federal presence in the event of the Army's retrenchment. Phil Burton assured that the Presidio would remain public space instead of becoming high-end beachfront property. This was an enormous gift to the park and city that he loved.

Although the real legwork for land acquisition at Golden Gate National Recreation Area came from organizations such as PFGGNRA, Phil Burton remained the visionary whose support translated grassroots action into law. In retrospect, Burton seems clairvoyant. In 1972, during the Vietnam War, the prospect of the Army ever leaving the Presidio was remote at best. Military expenditures comprised an ever-growing segment of the economies of the Golden State and the Bay Area, and the prospect of a military departure should have sent paroxysms of fear, a cold shudder down the spine of anyone who represented California at the state or national level. Yet, Phil Burton looked ahead in ways his contemporaries did not, a vision that the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, which included the remarkable caveat that the military could not undertake construction or any similar activity in the Presidio without NPS permission, confirmed.

Before the industrial economy lost ground to postindustrial service pursuits, before the Cold War came to an end and took military-driven prosperity from California and the Sunbelt states, Burton anticipated the long-term value of urban recreational space. He recognized the coming of a time when such resources were more valuable as scenery and recreation than they could ever again be as part of the military-industrial complex. This early cognizance of the meaning and impact of the transformation to a service economy made Burton prescient, a true visionary, along with Edgar Wayburn and Amy Meyer, the individuals most entitled to the credit for the final outline of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Some," *PT*, June 10, 1991; Bill Drake, "GGNRA Chief Anxious to Talk About Cattle Hill, But Not Road," *PT*, June 24, 1992.